

# The Healing Power of Forgiveness

By: Tom Edwards

The ability to forgive others can serve as a healthy catharsis for the soul. Many an individual's physical well-being has been greatly impaired due to the lack of this gracious virtue; for hate and an unforgiving spirit can lead to numerous physical maladies.

There seems to be more of a concern manifested these days about health in general, but often one overlooks the importance of possessing the proper attitude towards life which also plays a major role in one's physical condition. Poor mental health can lead to a wide variety of physical ailments that have been psychosomatically induced. Perhaps ulcers would be a classic example of this. The one who feels all "tied up in knots" over some grudge because of an injustice heartlessly inflicted is aware of the mind's influence over the body.

How much better it is for one to be set free from all entanglements of a bitter or begrudging spirit. Jesus emphasized the need to forgive others in **Matthew 6:15** and shows it to be a prerequisite towards our own salvation. Here He states: "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. "We often speak about the necessary steps that

lead to redemption, but how often do we include the need to forgive others as being one of the requirements? It was certainly a condition stipulated by God Himself.

How can we who are Christians not forgive others, especially in view of all which God has forgiven us? This, indeed, should be the basis for our own merciful disposition towards those who have treated us wrongfully. Paul conveyed this very thought in **Ephesians 4:32** by stating, "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you."



The story has been told about a man whose health was good. He was sturdy and strong; his heart functioned well, and his blood pressure was at a good level. Then his father died, and he got into a long legal dispute with his sister about their father's will. The case went to court, and the sister won. From that time forward, the man became obsessed with the lawsuit and his sister. His animosity towards her continued to grow each day. Soon he began having trouble with his heart and his blood pressure. Next his kidneys started bothering him; and, within just a few short months, he died due to a multiplicity of complications. The doctor, in commenting on his case, said, "It seems obvious that he died from bodily injuries wrought by powerful emotion." It appears that this man killed himself with ill-will --literally committed suicide.

God's word can teach us each to forgive. It will also show us many reasons why we should. Let us turn to His word today and allow the truth to set us free.